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Spirit of Christmas

Spirit of Christmas, Magnificent One!
Born with the coming of Heaven's dear Son;
Named for Our Mary, God-Mother of men,
Welcome! O Welcome to Earth once again!

Spirit of Christmas, from Raphael's heart,
By consecration, make all a part
Of Your great service, melting away
Shadows of discord by Love's Pink Ray.

Spirit of Christmas, charge through the throngs
Of men at Christmas, Charity's songs—
Songs of forgiveness, thanksgiving and cheer;
For our dear Earth hold Your peace all the year.

Spirit of Christmas, upon You we call
Gratitude's blessings from the God-self in all;
Make Earth the fullness of all that You are—
Hasten the Victory of dear Freedom's Star.*

Spirit of Christmas, with love aglow—
Spirit of Christmas, we love You so!
Seal now our Planet in Your Christ-Flame,
Stay with us always, in Jesus' dear Name.

* Name applied to our Earth as It evolves into greater perfection.

Also in this issue: **"The Miracle"; Apollonius of Tyana; Great White Brotherhood; Intra Muros; What of the New Year?**

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THE MIRACLE

By Ruth Sawyer

Once upon a time there lived in Germany a little clock-maker by the name of Hermann Joseph. He lived in one small room with a bench for his work; a chest for his tools; his wood; a cupboard for his dishes and a trundle-bed under the bench. Besides these, he had a stool and that was all, excepting his clocks. Hundreds of clocks he had—little and big, carved and plain, some with wooden faces and some with porcelain faces, shelf clocks, cuckoo clocks, clocks *with* chimes and clocks *without,* all hung on the walls which were almost covered with them. On a shelf in front of his one window, Hermann placed his best clocks to show the passers-by. Often they would stop to look and some one would cry:

"See, Hermann Joseph has made a new clock, finer than any of the rest!"

Then if anyone happened to want a clock, he would come in and buy it.

I have called Hermann a little clock-maker because his back was bent and his legs were crooked, making him look very short and funny, but his was the kindest face in all the city. Children dearly loved him. Whenever a doll lost an arm or an eye, its careless little mother would carry it straight to Hermann's shop.

"The baby needs something," she would say. "Cans't thou do it now for me?" Whatever work Hermann was doing he would always put it aside to mend the broken doll; never a penny would he take for the mending.

"Go spend it for sweetmeats, or, better still, put it by until Christmas time. 'Twill bring thee some happiness then, maybe," he would always say.

At Christmas time, in that long ago, the citizens were accustomed to bring gifts to the great Cathedral and lay them before the Holy Mother and Child. People saved all through the year that they might have beautiful gifts to bring on that day. The saying among them was that when a gift was brought which pleased the Christ-child more than any other, He would reach down from Mary's arms and take it. This was only a saying, of course. Herr Graf, the oldest man in the city, could not remember that the miracle had ever really happened;

many laughed at the very idea. But children often talked about the expected miracle and poets made beautiful verses about it. Often, when a rich gift was placed beside the altar, the watchers would whisper among themselves: "Perhaps now we shall see the miracle."

Those who had no gifts to bring went to the Cathedral on Christmas Eve, to see the gifts of others, to hear the carols and to watch the burning of the waxen tapers. Among these was the little clock-maker. Often he was asked: "Why do you never bring a gift?" Once the bishop himself questioned him: "Poorer than thou have brought offerings to the Child. Where is thy gift?"

Hermann had answered: "Wait; someday you shall see! I, too, shall bring a gift some day."

The truth was that the little clock-maker was so busy helping others all the year, that he never had anything left at Christmas-time. But he had a wonderful idea on which he was working every minute that he could spare from his clocks. The work had taken him years and years; no one knew anything about it but Trude, his neighbor's child, and Trude had grown from a baby into a little house-mother; still the gift was not finished.

His gift was to be a clock, the most wonderful clock ever made. He had fashioned every part of it with loving care. The case, the works, the weights, the hands and the face all had taken years of labor. He had spent years carving the case and hands; years perfecting the works. Now Hermann saw that with a little more haste, he could finish his gift-clock for the coming Christmas. He mended the children's toys as before and he gave up making his regular clocks, so that he had fewer to sell; often his cupboard was empty and he went supperless to bed. That only made him a little thinner and his face a little kinder.

Meantime, his gift clock became more and more beautiful. It was fashioned like a rude stable with rafters, stall and crib. The Holy Mother knelt beside a manger in which a tiny Christ-child lay, while through the open door the hours came. Three of the hours were kings; three were shepherds; three were soldiers; and three were Angels. When an hour struck, the figure representing that hour knelt before the sleeping child, while the silver chimes played the "Magnificat."

"Thou sees't?" said the clock-maker to Trude. "Not just on Sundays and holidays should we remember to worship the Christ-child and bring Him gifts, but every day, every hour."

The days went by like clouds before a winter wind. At last the clock was finished. So happy was Hermann with his work, that he put the gift-clock on the shelf before the window to show the passers-by. Crowds looked at it all day long. Many whispered: "Do you think this can be the gift Hermann has spoken of, his offering on Christmas Eve at the Church?"

The day before Christmas came. Hermann cleaned up his shop; wound all his clocks; brushed his clothes; and went over the gift-clock again to be sure everything was perfect.

"My gift will not look mean beside the others," he thought, happily. In fact he was so happy that he gave away all but one penny to a blind beggar who passed his door. Then, remembering that he had eaten nothing since breakfast, he spent that last penny for a Christmas apple to eat with a crust of bread. He was putting these in the cupboard to eat after he was dressed, when the door opened and Trude stood there crying softly.

"Child, child, what ails thee?" He gathered her into his arms.

"Tis the father. He is hurt. All the money that was put by for the tree and sweets and toys has gone to Herr Doctor. Now, how can I tell the children? Already they have lighted the candle at the window and are waiting for Kris Kringle to come."

The clock-maker laughed merrily.

"Come, come, little one, all will be well. Hermann will sell a clock for thee. Some house in the city must need a clock; in a wink we shall have money enough for the tree and the toys. Go home and sing."

He buttoned on his great coat and, picking out the best of the old clocks, he went out. He went first to the rich merchants, but their houses were full of clocks. Then he went to the journeymen, but they said his clock was old-fashioned. He even stood on the corners of the streets and in the square, crying: "A clock—a good clock for sale." No one paid any attention to him. At last, he gathered up courage and went to Herr Graf himself.

"Will your Excellency buy a clock?" he said, trembling at his own boldness. "I would not ask, but it is Christmas and I need to buy happiness for some children."

The Herr Graf smiled.

"Yes, I will buy a clock, but not that one. I will pay a hundred gold pieces for the clock thou has had in thy window these four days past."

"But, your Excellency, that is impossible!" Poor Hermann trembled harder than ever.

"Poof! Nothing is impossible. That clock or none. Get thee home. I will send for it in half an hour and pay thee the money."

The little clock-maker stumbled out.

"Anything but that—anything but that," he kept mumbling over and over to himself on his way home. But as he passed Trude's house he saw the children at the window with their lighted candle and he heard the mother singing.

So it happened that the servant who came from the Herr Graf carried the gift clock away with him; but the clock-maker would take but five of the gold pieces in payment. As the servant disappeared up the street the chimes commenced to ring from the Cathedral. The streets suddenly became noisy with the many people going thither, bearing their Christmas offerings.

"I have gone empty-handed before," said the little clock-maker sadly. "I can go empty-handed once again!" Again he buttoned up his great coat.

As he turned to shut his cupboard door he saw the Christmas apple and an odd smile crept into the corner of his mouth and lighted his eyes.

"It is all I have, my dinner for two days. I will carry that to the Christ-child. Any gift is better, after all, than going again empty-handed."

How full of peace and beauty was the great Cathedral when Hermann entered. A thousand tapers were burning and everywhere was the sweet scent of the Christmas greens. The altar before the Holy Mother and Child was loaded with gifts. The gifts were richer than had been brought for many years; marvellously wrought vessels from the greatest silversmiths; cloth of gold and cloth of silk brought from the East by the merchants; poets' songs written on rolls of costly paper; pictures of Saints and the Holy Family. Even the king had brought

his crown and scepter; everyone had brought rich gifts to lay before the Child. After all these offerings, came the little clock-maker walking slowly down the long aisle holding tight his Christmas apple.

When the people saw him, a murmur rose, sounded a moment through the church and then grew clear and loud.

"Shame! See, he is too mean to bring his clock! He hoards it as a miser hoards his gold. See what he brings! Shame!"

The words reached Hermann as he stumbled on blindly, his head dropped forward on his breast, his hands groping the way. The distance seemed endless. Now he knew he was past the seats; now his feet touched the first step; he must climb seven steps to reach the altar. Would his feet never reach the top?

"One, two, three," he counted to himself; then he tripped and almost fell. "Four, five, six—." He was nearly there—*Only one step more!*

The murmur of shame died away. In its place rose sounds of wonder and awe. Soon the words became clear and distinct.

"The miracle! The miracle!"

The people knelt in the great Cathedral; the Bishop raised his hands in prayer. The little clock-maker stumbled to the last step. Then he looked up through dim eyes and saw the Christ-child leaning toward him, far down from Mary's arms. His hands were outstretched to take the little clock-maker's gift.

APOLLONIUS OF TYANA

Apollonius, the great Greek Sage, was born of wealthy and affluent parents at Tyana, a Hellenic City of Asia Minor. The exact date of his birth is obscure, although, contrary to the accepted opinion of most writers, his work did precede that of the Master, Jesus. He grew to be handsome of appearance; perfect of physique; keen of mind; mild, gentle and modest of manner; pensive and thoughtful of mood.

Because of his insatiable desire for learning, he was sent, at the age of fourteen, to Tarsus, then a noted center of culture and education, to continue his studies. But this was not enough. The "reach of the soul" was for deeper instruction. So he betook himself to a nearby town, Aegae by name, where,

at the temple of Aesculapius, he became fully absorbed with the study of philosophy. None of the schools of thought impressed him as did the teachings of Pythagoras. For *this* he had been searching. His instructor, Euxemus, being not a man of exalted moral virtue, merely parrotted the principles of the Pythagorean system. Nevertheless, Apollonius caught the spirit of the Samian sage, resolved to accept the disciplines and live the life.

Shocked by the firm decision of his student, Euxemus asked him how he intended to begin.

"By refraining from the use of intoxicants in any form and all flesh foods—living on the fruits and vegetables which the Earth produces; wearing only linen garments; and, silencing the chatter of the tongue, until the Voice of the God-self speaks Its direction," he replied.

So well did he discipline himself that he merited the admiration of the priests of the temple and became renowned far and wide for his lofty philosophical thinking.

His youthful and spiritual mien drew the attention of the governor of Cilicia, who came to the temple, pretending to sacrifice to the gods, but, who in reality, sought out Apollonius to be his mediator.

"And why do you come to me?" queried Sage.

"Since you have found so much favor with the gods, make me friendly to them," the ruler pleaded.

"It is only because Virtue, which is my life, has introduced me to them. You need no mediator. Let your own honesty recommend you to them," Apollonius answered.

Upon reaching his majority, Apollonius returned for a while to Tyana, where he attempted to rescue his elder brother from a wild and desolate life. The brother having spent all his legal inheritance in aimless living, was without further means of support; so Apollonius gave him most of his own share of the family wealth and by his gentle love and persuasion restored his brother to respectable manhood.

The next five years were spent by the Tyanean in Pamphylia and Cilicia, during which time *he did not once break his vow of absolute silence*. On many an occasion did rebellion and resentment rise within him against the unjust insults and derisions of the irresponsible throng, but he held his peace. Meanwhile, he went about doing good. Once in Pamphylia he

settled a corn strike by the dignity of his manner, the motion of his hand and head and by writing his directions on tablets.

Apollonius was widely travelled, frequenting holy spots over the face of the Earth, wherever men gathered in Shrines and Temples, attempting to fathom the mysteries of the Universe.

Perceiving more deeply the original intent of the several Brotherhoods, than did most of the average members, he sought to restore the various cults to their pristine purity.

Leaving Antioch, he went to Ninevah where he met Damis, who became his devoted companion and fellow traveller. It was his passionate affection for the Sage, and not his comprehension of Divine wisdom that bound Damis to the master. At no time was Damis permitted to enter the innermost recesses of the Sacred Shrines.

From Ninevah to Babylon, to India journeyed Apollonius and his trusted companion, returning to Seleucia, Cyprus, Ionia, Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamus, Troy, Spain, Rhodes, Alexandria, up the Nile to Ethiopa, the Master learning, instructing, healing, reforming.

During that part of the journey when they had arrived at the height of the Himalayas, Apollonius asked Damis if he had noted growth in his experiences from the day before.

"We are closer to Heaven," replied the companion.

"And dost thou know more of the things of the spirit than thou didst know yesterday?" asked the Sage.

"No," answered Damis, "though it seems that I could touch the sky with my staff."

"Thou art, then, no nearer Heaven than thou wert yesterday when we were in the valley below. When thy spirit rises to the understanding of Truth, Justice and Righteousness, then thou shalt be far nearer Heaven than upon these mountains."

Returning to Greece from India, his "cup" overflowing with wisdom, Apollonius stopped for awhile in the temple of Aesculapius at Pergamus, where he healed many of the sick and instructed the priests in effective cures of which they knew not.

Arriving at Athens at a time when candidates were being initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries, he found himself immediately surrounded by the multitude seeking wisdom.

The Sage rebuked them for interrupting their sacred ceremonies and he, himself, made application for initiation. He, being far advanced beyond the Order of Eleusis, had a purpose in applying for admittance to a Brotherhood of lesser accomplishments. Eleusinia in its inception had been an organization of the Mystic Way. The officers, while not having the inner vision, were still performing the rites. Apollonius realized that the only way by which he could imbue the ceremonial form with spiritual impetus was to physically be within the Inner Sanctum.

But the officiating priest of the occasion, whether out of ignorance or jealousy, refused to accept Apollonius on the grounds that he was a "pretender."

"Of that you speak more truly than you know," said the sage; "for, I being more versed in mystic rites than you, come here to be initiated by you, *pretending to know less.*"

Astonished by such candor and pressed by the anger of the crowd, the Hierophant pleaded with Apollonius to accept the initiation, but he refused saying that he would apply later under a succeeding Hierophant.

At Sparta he urged the citizens to maintain their high standards of self-discipline and to continue their frugal living and athletic games.

He hallowed the grounds at Thermopylae and eulogized those Spartans who had been overwhelmed there by arrows, saying that those who had fallen there in the name of liberty, had elevated the grounds to the height of Mount Aetna, and far above the summit of Mount Olympus.

Reconsecrating the Temples and reforming the system of public worship in Egypt was more difficult than those he had previously cleansed. Rhodes, however, extended to him open hospitality and his presence in the Temple of Serapis Bey at Luxor commanded admiration. Even his utterances there seemed to engender an atmosphere fraught with wisdom and divinity. He spoke out boldly against all blood sacrifices and was adamant against the frenzied craze of horse-racing.

After cities along the shore of the Hellespont had experienced severe earthquake shocks, certain charlatans of Egyptian and Chaldean blood offered to perform appeasement rites to the gods for large sums of money from the sufferers. Apollonius drove them away, instructing the victims that no

true philosopher would accept money for the giving forth of religious instruction or performing sacred ceremonies.

Once, upon the strength of a false accusation, he was brought before the Roman ruler, Domitian, for trial. Forthright and fearless, Apollonius in his replies to the cross-examination, merely angered the emperor further. The accused was, therefore, sent to prison in chains.

Damis became concerned.

"How long can this go on?" he asked his Master.

"I am already free," replied the Sage; and with that he withdrew his leg from the shackles, but stepped into the fetters again and continued his voluntary servitude.

Damis was now convinced that his Master was not an ordinary Sage, but had acquired powers of super-human proportions.

Apollonius, brought up for final trial, was not permitted to read his prepared defense, but answered directly and with banter the questions put before him.

"I declare you not guilty," said the emperor, "but I shall require that you remain until I have had further talks with you."

Whereupon, Apollonius miraculously disappeared from court and was nowhere to be found in Rome. He appeared, however, in Naples, where he had sent Damis ahead to await his coming.

In Ephesus a few years later, while instructing the multitude, he saw with the inner vision, the assassination of the tyrant, Domitian.

"Keep up your courage," he admonished the Ephesians, "for this day your tyrant is no more."

News brought in the usual fashion, a few days later, proved his insight to be accurate.

Tigellinus, who managed affairs in Rome, also brought Apollonius to trial. Upon a scroll had been written lengthy and ponderous accusations of the Sage.

Flashing the scroll before the eyes of the prisoner, the guard informed him that his time had come.

Whereupon, Tigellinus opened the scroll to read its contents and found nothing on its surface.

Apollonius was dismissed.

Vehemently, at all times, did our philosopher oppose being

called a "soothsayer." With such he would have no part. He had raised his consciousness until he had tuned into wisdom eternal, from which he drew his knowledge and inspiration, as do all the *truly great*. To him, therefore, Nature and the lives of all mankind were open books.

Three times a day did he spend certain definite time in devotion and adoration to the Universal God—Father of us all. The afternoons were given to instructing his fellowman.

According to the presently existing records of this Great Sage of the past, not much seems to be known about the exact date of either his birth or his passing from this world of form. Suffice it to say that He is believed to have lived to be more than 100 years old (which was quite an attainment in that day when the life span was not more than about half those years). One of the editions of the Encyclopedia Brittanica tells us that Apollonius of Tyana died at about the time of the birth of Jesus, the Christ.

THE GREAT WHITE BROTHERHOOD

(On: The Law of Re-embodiment—providing opportunity for spiritual advancement and development until one has become a living Example of the Christ as Beloved Jesus did!)

Time and again unusually great and very brilliant souls of advanced spiritual development come to Earth and live their lives here for a few years—the radiation of Their presence with us seeming much like a blazing meteor sweeping through the sky of human experience. Then they seem to disappear into the farthest recesses of the Universe and the masses of mankind remember Them no more. However, a few from among mankind have lifted their eyes and attention from their self-centered tasks, listening and responding to the illuminating wisdom of such "meteors". These who so opened themselves to the spiritual knowledge which was far in advance of the accepted tenets of the masses, spoke and wrote of their interpretations of these blessings and left them behind at their departure from embodiment here, to help their fellowmen. However, so many times most of the people (not having had the experience first-hand themselves) questioned the reality of such advanced beings and doubted the veracity of their "reporters".

Thus for many ages mankind in general have accepted (through the power of contagion) the limited concepts, doubts and fears of each other until, seeping into the unprotected minds and energized by unprotected feelings, these concepts have manifested in the worlds of nearly all as the distresses which we see around us on every side today. How we do hold on to these generally accepted concepts (true or false—it matters not!) and *how we do love confirmation of that which we believe to be true*—much of the time practically no one ever even bothering to find out whether it be true or not!

Practically every beneficial advance in science, education, medicine, humanitarianism, research and religion has been violently opposed by the masses of the people and its proponents ridiculed and despised as charlatans and fakirs. For instance, the original Founder of every great World Religion brings Truth and, with it, a certain aspect of religious worship by which that Truth may be sustained and expanded in the physical appearance world. Then, when the original Founder is called "Home", the earnest and sincere followers of such an One weave into those Divine Concepts their own ideas, plans and etheric memories.

Previous Embodiment of Jesus

Such a blazing "meteor" was one Apollonius of Tyana. To most of the world of today even his name is not known. Now, just who was this "Apollonius of Tyana" and why do we bring him to the attention of our gentle readers in our Christmas issue? Because this brilliant soul of spiritual light and consciousness in his day was one of the embodiments of our Beloved Master Jesus—the one just previous to His advent as Jesus—born of Beloved Mary—Whose birthday we joyously and gratefully celebrate at this season of the year. In the embodiment previous to this of Apollonius, certain ancient records show that our Beloved Jesus was a pilot on a merchant-marine—into which etheric record surely someone "tuned" when they wrote the lovely words to that hymn "Jesus, Saviour, pilot me over life's tempestuous sea . . ."

Whether accepted by mankind or not, TRUTH REMAINS TRUE! The power in electricity is not annulled because of unbelief in its existence. That which is known as "electricity" has always been in existence although the blessings of its use

were forgotten by the mind of man for many centuries. Then, when mankind finally arose again in consciousness to the place where he was willing to *seek* (and therefore inevitably *find*), the goodness of God "from Whom all blessings flow", returned this gift into mankind's use.

If there is always confirmation *of that which we already know,* where is the progress—the advancement—individually or collectively? It is to find out that which has not been known before that some few lifestreams in every Age open their minds to new ideas and better ways of living. Then why not open one's mind concerning religious things also, for—"God fulfills Himself in many ways—lest *one good* custom should corrupt the world", said Tennyson long ago.

You know, even in the outer world of daily experience, we have a saying: "Ignorance of the Law is NO EXCUSE!" Now as we said before in our previous reference to electricity —your belief or disbelief in its existence has nothing whatsoever to do with its power to act. Your ignorance or disbelief of a "live wire" in your vicinity will not save your life if you contact that wire—deliberately or otherwise! So—let us reason together! *Let us think!*

Re-embodiment is a Divine, Cosmic Law! Everything in existence—either here on this planet or in the Cosmos—proceeds from the invisible to the visible; from the lesser to the greater. Shakespeare refers to this Law of Re-embodiment when He says in one of His plays: "All the world's a stage and all the men and women players; they have their *exits* and their *entrances* . . ." Why did he not say "entrances and exits" which would seem more reasonable to the human mind? Because He knew the law that our "exit" (so-called "death") *is not the end* for us—no matter how many millions may unfortunately believe that falsehood to be a Truth. Do you see?

What Makes a Genius

We quote from "Divine Science Monthly" of some time ago: "It has been said that Jesus was a spiritual genius in the same way that we think of Beethoven as a musical genius or Edison as a genius in the realm of invention. Now just how did they get that way? We have only to consider the *dominant interest* in each of these lives and then to consider further the method of working and amount of thinking that

must have been done in order to foster these interests so as to bring forth such worth-while and enduring results. If we are willing to think about it at all, we must admit that such outstanding accomplishments as those of these three geniuses *were not the results of mere chance!*

Did Jesus suddenly appear upon the scene at thirty years of age after a prolonged pleasure trip, having had nothing to do for eighteen years but fritter away His time and energy with this and that? Did He suddenly, without long years of previous meditation, disciplines and practice, develop a habit of thought and action which appeared to his friends to be as effortless and natural as breathing? Did He?"

Is it unreasonable to even suppose that—if it takes study, practice and devotion to manifest such an ideal in daily living that there would have to be some preparation in *previous embodiments* to develop such a Divine Example of the Heavenly Father to all who lived then and all who have since come upon our Earth for more than 2000 years since? Is that so unreasonable and illogical? *Think about it!*

The Great White Brotherhood is made up of those unusually brilliant meteors who have lived here in the past and, while perfecting and raising their own consciousnesses and worlds, raised mankind as well for, "a little leaven leaveneth the whole loaf." Our Beloved Jesus is perhaps the best-known of these, particularly to the Western World. However, there have been many others; the Beloved Buddha was such an one, Beloved El Morya was Melchior (one of the Three Wise Men); Beloved Hilarion was the Apostle Paul while on Earth; Saint Germain was Francis Bacon (writer of the Shakespearean plays), Columbus, St. Joseph and many others. The Beloved Jesus Himself was Joshua in a former life too.

So—gentle reader—let us keep an open mind to that which is good whether or not that good is accepted as such by the masses. There must be some who are willing to light their torches from the Flame of Truth and then gently but firmly and constantly carry that Truth to mankind—always giving freedom to each and all as to whether they wish to embrace that Truth or not. Freedom is the order of the day; we see the desire for It everywhere—but it can *not* and *never* will be permanently sustained by force—only by following the gentle teachings of the Beloved Jesus—Prince of Peace—Whose dear

birthday we so gratefully honor at this season of the year. His Truths are the Law of Life. They have been brought by every true Avatar Who has ever come to Earth—by every blazing "meteor" to whom we have referred. So—in loving tolerance at our Christmastide—let us keep our minds open to GOD—THE GOOD—in all, trying to find the expressions of that good and encourage their expansion until all have become again the fullness of our own true Christ—of which Jesus was such a perfect living Example!

ARE ANGELS REAL?

At Christmastime mankind's attention turns again to the Angels—more so than at any other time of the year. A gentleman said to a friend one day not so long ago—"Who in the world ever saw an Angel? How can you prove there are any?" Well—there have been *lots of visitations* by Angels to the mankind of this planet—in the past (many recorded in the Bible) and present too. Those Angelic forms were just as visible to those to whom they came as yours are this moment to your friends.

Angels are very real Beings—certainly just as real as mankind and their bodies are most certainly not so perishable! For the most part, mankind have almost completely forgotten the Angels—sometimes around Christmas time their tinselled likenesses in cardboard shape and form were brought out for the entertainment of the children and such grown-ups as still believe in Santa Claus! However, during the last few years, a more real interest in Angels has awakened among the masses and they are at least accepting their reality to the extent where they are manufacturing millions of Angelic forms in china and plastic to adorn the bric-a-brac shelves; in this way reminding mankind of Their presence all the year long! Mankind's forgetfulness of the Angels has been unfortunate indeed for by this forgetfulness they have shut themselves away from and deprived themselves of much protection, comfort, supply and healing which they could otherwise have had as easily as breathing. The Angels were meant to be the spiritual comfort and assistance to mankind as the Elementals were to serve them in other ways.

As we said above—*Angels are very real Beings.* They repre-

sent the God-feelings of the Virtues of perfection from God's heart. That is one way in which the God-perfection is radiated into and absorbed by the people of this Earth from time to time, especially at Christmas when men's minds are more open to receive such radiation. If it were not for this transcendent blessing to the people, mankind's continued creation of discord would long since have completely removed them from this planet and the opportunity which it gives them as a place to learn the mastery of substance and energy by the use of Divine Love.

Angels of Healing—God-friends to Man

Angels of Healing (sometimes these are quite large in size and they are always transcendent in beauty, power and God-perfection) voluntarily abide over all hospitals, mental institutions, "poor houses", penitentiaries and every focus of mankind's need and discord and, in a constant twenty-four hour service, they are responsible for many, many of the healings and comforts which come to the unfortunate lifestreams who have been drawn into such foci of distress. These great Angels of Healing have been seen at times by certain individuals whose prayer-force was so strong at that time that it raised their consciousness to the place where their own inner sight temporarily revealed such a Being to their physical sight. Often, when the need is great and the feeling of supplication very intense, so-called "miraculous" happenings take place. Do you know the meaning of a "miracle"? Well—one of the Great Ones has said that "Miracles are just God's ways—uninterfered with by man". *Think it through!*

Very real Angelic Presences are also always abiding over all churches, synagogues, mosques and other foci of blessing to the people and, at the close of every service, these Angelic Beings gather up the prayer-force as well as the harmony of song and devotion which has been released from the worshippers, carrying it to the Great Ones Who have voluntarily chosen to answer mankind's prayers. They then return to the worshippers a greatly amplified blessing in return for the worship which they released. Sometimes the supplicant is not in a state of sufficient emotional peace and tranquility of mind to be able to consciously *accept* that blessing but it always comes into their worlds somehow—waiting outside the turmoil of their

anguished thoughts and feelings until there is more peace there—thus giving it an opportunity to outwardly manifest. Then—quick as a flash—that pure substance is directed into their worlds either by an Angel or the Holy Christ Self of the individual which Jesus spoke of as "the Mediator between God and man".

The Spirit of Christmas—Named "Mary"

"The Spirit of Christmas" (referred to in the cover-poem of this issue) is one of those transcendent Beings of Whom we have spoken—a great Angel of beautiful form, substance and God-consciousness. She is named for Beloved Mary, the Mother of Jesus. A fuller explanation of "The Spirit of Christmas" may be found in the Dec.-Jan. issue of "Hope" for 1955.

Now, let us be practical about all of this. Since the Angels are not just a pretty fancy in the minds of children but very real God-beings *who actually want to be our friends,* let us every day consciously accept Their Presence with us at our call (whether we see Them at first with the physical sight or not). When you have built up a great enough momentum of acceptance of Their Presence you will be able to see Them—as well as walk and talk with Them as we do with each other. On other planets—Venus, for instance (which Star is far ahead of the Earth in Her evolution) this is a daily occurrence.

It is not only a pleasant pastime along our way "Home" to acknowledge such Angelic Beings many times a day whenever certain foci of distress (such as hospitals, prisons, etc.) are brought to our attention, but such a continued practice will draw to us individually, as well as to mankind collectively, more and more of the Angels' assistance Who radiate only good of every description. You know—gratitude is the great multiplying power. (See Beloved Archangel Chamuel's Address in the book "The Seven Beloved Archangels Speak" for instruction on multiplying your good of every description, especially finances.)

The Angels all love balanced beauty of form and color (good, clear, clean bright colors), music, perfume and kindliness of spirit. Try to surround yourselves with these if you want to draw the Angelic Host close to you—thus making your world a focus for Their Presence to bless life.

If you would like to have Christmas gifts *all year long,*

practice acknowledging and being grateful for the Angels and Their service to man, Call Them about you and try to feel Their peace. They will gladly give it to you—without money and without price. Will you consciously accept it? *It is yours for the asking!*

Remember! Peace is all-important to you—to your health (physical, mental and emotional) and to your finances as well for "One's ships come in over a calm sea". Surely the world needs peace today! Draw it forth around yourself and let it flow out to comfort all the life you meet each day. The Angels of Peace will help you—if you will ask Them. Let the "Spirit of Christmas" and all Her Cosmic Christ Peace abide with you all the year through.

Suggested Prayer

My very own Beloved Heavenly Father Whose very life I am using every instant! Make and keep me worthy at all times to have as my daily companions Angels Who will personally abide with me all through the rest of my journey here. See that I accept Their Presence with me and daily give acknowledgement to Them, being grateful for Their companionship at all times. Let me see, hear, walk and talk with Them as I do with my fellowman, lovingly co-operating with Them to bring comfort, peace and happiness all the rest of my way "Home" to Thee. I sincerely thank and bless Thee for these Angelic Friends—the gift of Thy love for me and all.

THERE IS NO DEATH

2nd Installment (con't from Aug.-Sept. issue)

From the book—"INTRA MUROS"

"Now come little sister, I long to give you welcome to our home," saying which, he took my hand and led me up the low steps on to the broad veranda, with its beautiful inlaid floor of rare and costly marble, and its massive columns. Between these, vines covered with rich, glossy leaves of green were intermingled with flowers of exquisite color and delicate perfume, hanging in heavy festoons.

"It is heavenly!" I said.

"It is heavenly," he answered. "It could not be otherwise."

He led me through a doorway between the marble columns,

into a large reception hall, whose inlaid floor, mullioned window and broad, low stairway at once held my fancy. Before I could speak, my brother turned to me and taking both my hands said:

"Welcome, a thousand welcomes, dearest sister, to your Heavenly Home!"

He led me into a large, oblong room, upon whose threshold I stopped in wondering delight. The entire walls and floor of the room were still of that exquisite marble, polished to the greatest luster; but over walls and floors were strewn exquisite, long stemmed roses of every variety and color, from the deepest crimson to the most delicate shades of pink and yellow.

"Come inside," said my brother.

"I do not wish to crush those perfect flowers," I answered.

"Well, then, suppose we gather some of them."

I stooped to take one from the floor—when lo! I found it was imbedded in the marble. I said:

"What does it mean? You surely do not tell me that none of these are natural flowers?"

He nodded with a pleased smile, then said: "This room has a history. Let me tell you about it. One day as I was busily working upon the house, a company of young people, boys and girls, came to the door and asked if they might enter. I gladly gave assent, and then one of them said:"

"Is this house really for Mr. and Mrs. Sprague?"

"It is," I answered.

"We used to know and love them. They are our friends and we want to know if we may do something to help you make it beautiful."

"Indeed you may," I said, touched by the request. "What can you do?"

One of them asked, "May we beautify this room?"

At once the girls, all of whom had immense bunches of roses in their hands, began to throw the flowers broadcast over the floor and against the walls. Wherever they struck the walls, they, to my surprise, remained, as though in some way permanently attached. When the roses had all been scattered, the room looked just as it does now, only the flowers were fresh-gathered roses. Then the boys each produced a small case of delicate tools and in a moment all, boys and girls, were down upon the marble floor and busy at work. How they did it I do

not know—it is one of the celestial arts taught to those of highly artistic tastes—but they embedded each living flower just where and as it had fallen in the marble and preserved it as you see before you. At last, when all was complete, they called me to see their work saying they would be sure to return when either of you came, they went away together, to do something of the kind elsewhere, I doubt not."

"Who were these lovely people, Frank? Do you know them?"

"Of course, I know them."

"Precious children!" I said. "How little I thought my love for them, in the olden days, would ever bring to me this added happiness here! How little we know of the links binding the two worlds!"

"Ah, yes!" said my brother, "that is just it. How little we know! If only we could realize while we are yet mortals, that day by day we are building for eternity, how different our lives in many ways would be! Every gentle word, every generous thought, every unselfish deed, will become a pillar of eternal beauty in the life to come. We cannot be selfish and unloving in the Earth life and suddenly become generous and loving in the next; the two lives are too closely blended—one but a continuation of the other."

Rising, we crossed the room that henceforward was to hold for me such tender associations and entered the library. A large, stained-glass window opened upon the front veranda and two large bow-windows, not far apart, were in the back of the room. Not far removed from the bowed window, stood a beautiful writing-desk, with everything ready for use; and upon it was a chaste golden bowl filled with scarlet carnations.

"My brother's desk," said Frank.

"And his favorite flowers," I added.

"Yes, that follows. Here we never forget the tastes and preferences of those we love."

My first sensation upon entering the room was genuine surprise at the sight of the books.

"Why, have we books in heaven?"

"Why not?" asked my brother. "What strange ideas we mortals have of the pleasures and duties of this blessed life! We seem to think that (so-called) death of the body means an entire change to the soul; but that is not the case, by any means. We bring to this life the same tastes, the same desires, the same knowledge we had before death. If these were not sufficiently pure and good to form a part of this life, then we ourselves may not enter. What would be the use of our oft-times long lives, given to the pursuit of certain worthy and legitimate knowledge, if at death it all counts as nothing and we begin this life on a wholly different line of thought and study? No, no; would that all could understand, as I said before, that we are building for Eternity during our earthly life! The purer the thoughts, the nobler the ambitions, the loftier the aspirations, the higher the rank we take among the hosts of heaven; the more earnestly we follow the studies and duties in our life of probation, the better fitted we shall be to carry them forward, on and on to completion and perfection here."

"But the books—who writes them? Are any of them books we knew and loved below?"

"Undoubtedly, many of them; all, indeed, that in any way helped to elevate the human mind or immortal soul. Then, many of the rarest minds in the Earth-life, upon entering on this higher life, gain such elevated and extended views of the subjects that have been with them lifelong studies, that, pursuing them with zest, they write out for the benefit of those less gifted, the higher, stronger views they have themselves acquired. Thus they remain leaders and teachers in this rarer life, as they were while yet in the world. Is it to be expected that the great soul who has so recently joined our ranks, whose 'Changed Life' and 'Pax Vobiscum' uplifted so many lives while on Earth, should lay his pen aside when his clear brain and great heart have read the mystery of the higher knowledge? Not so. When he has conned his lessons well, he will write them out for the benefit of others, less gifted, who must follow. Leaders there must always be, in this Divine life, as in the former life—leaders and teachers in many varied lines of thought. But all this knowledge will come to you simply and naturally as you grow into the new life."

After a short rest in this lovely room, my brother took me through all the remaining rooms of the house. Of only one other will I speak at this time. As he drew aside the draperies which hung before the columned doorway of a lovely room, he said:

"Your own special place for rest and study."

The entire apartment was beautiful beyond description; but as I had seen it many times before I was fully able to comprehend its perfect completeness. Only one picture hung upon the walls and that was a life-size portrait of the Christ, just opposite the couch. It was not an artist's conception of the human Christ, bowed under the weight of the sins of the world; nor yet the thorn-crowned head of the crucified Savior of mankind; but the likeness of the living Master; of Christ the victorious, of Christ the crowned. The wonderful eyes looked directly and tenderly into your own and the lips seemed to pronounce the benediction of peace. The ineffable beauty of the Divine face seemed to illumine the room with a holy light, and I fell upon my knees and pressed my lips to the sandaled feet so truthfully portrayed upon the canvas, while my heart cried: "Master, beloved Master and Savior!"

After some time spent in this delightful place, we passed through the open window onto the marble terrace. A stairway of finished marble wound gracefully down to the lawn beneath the trees. The fruit-laden branches of the trees hung within easy reach from the terrace. My brother gathered some of the different varieties and bade me try them. I did so with much relish and refreshment. Once the rich juice from the fruit ran out profusely over my hands and the front of my dress. "Oh, I have ruined my dress, I fear!"

"Show me the stains," he said.

To my amazement not a spot could I find.

"What does it mean?"

"Simply," he answered, "that no impurity can remain for an instant in this air. Nothing decays, nothing tarnishes, or in any way disfigures or mars the universal purity or beauty of the place. As fast as the fruit ripens and falls, all that is not immediately gathered at once evaporates, not even the seed remaining."

I had noticed that no fruit lay beneath the trees—this then, was the reason for it.

" 'And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth,' " I quoted thoughtfully.

"Yes, even so," he answered; "even so."

(Excerpts from INTRA MUROS through the courtesy of David C. Cook Publishing Co.)

(to be continued)

WHAT OF THE NEW YEAR?

What does the New Year mean to you? Does Its coming just mean a party of fun and feasting and then a return to the daily "grind" of making a living—whether it be this year, next year or any old year at all?

Do you know that your life is *very, very precious?* How much does it mean to you? We have often heard the phrase "Self-preservation is the first law of life" but those who express this statement are referring to the preservation of the physical body. *That is not the Self!* The Self of you is eternal—for your life is the life of God—the gift of His very Own essence to you! What was the state of your life when you first received it in this embodiment alone? Consider a new-born baby—is its life not good? Has it not a beautiful, symmetrical little form, skin like velvet, a sweet breath and, generally, is not a baby beautiful? Then what happened to change the appearance of that life? Does the aged man (or even one in middle-age) retain and expand the perfection of his life when God first gave it into his keeping as a child? Of course the child form will change but it should retain and expand its perfection and not lose it as the years roll by. *Think of these things*—they are interesting as well as thought-provoking.

Now, gentle reader, life is just so precious to God Himself that Beloved Jesus says we are to give an accounting for our use of every "jot and tittle" of it at the close of our life-span here. Can you give a good report? What treasures have you laid up in Heaven? Such "treasures" are those gifts of kindliness of spirit to all we contact, quick and easy forgiveness of wrongs done to us or through us to others—*remembering them no more;* they are words, thoughts, feelings and deeds done to others that bring peace, comfort, happiness and well-being *for these expand the Light of the World!*

Would you like to do better this New Year than last? You can, you know, if you want to *enough!* Let not the days of opportunity slip lazily through your fingers—one day there is to be an accounting for all the time and energy you have used. One cannot begin any time sooner than NOW to better his world and live more closely to that which, within himself, he knows he ought to be! Your very own indwelling God-Presence (the life which beats your physical heart) will help you to do

this. This New Year lies hopefully before you—seize its opportunity *for such an opportunity may not come again for you in this life.* You can NEVER be sure of ANY TIME BUT RIGHT NOW! Ask that great, loving individualized God-Presence right within your beating heart to help you—in the New Year—to accomplish perhaps *just one thing* which will improve your life and make and keep you happier, healthier, wealthier and wiser than you have ever known yourself to be. Try it! Take, for instance, the ability to control your speech—"hold your tongue" as we were admonished as children. This is a most necessary control for those who would be successful in any endeavor. Train yourself to hold back the critical, condemning word and speak only words of kindness, praise and comfort. See what you can do in a very short time to expand your friendships and your peace of mind. Those words of kindness and comfort going out from you *must return to you* for the Law of the Universe is a circle and they come back greatly amplified in power to bless you individually. *It costs nothing to try!* This suggestion is just one of many which could be made—you know best what you would like to improve in your world—but, whatever it is—DO IT NOW! Do not put it off. Seize the New Year and Its glorious opportunities to write lovely things in your Book of Life (which is REAL) and when the Recording Angel in charge thereof (Who is also as real as you are!) opens that Book to read one day when your task here is over, you will be glad you took this opportunity of blessing yourself by the good use of God's life loaned to you in 1957!

"Dear God within, Thy love for me
  Urges me on to live for Thee!
Help me to make of this New Year
  A happy life—free from doubt and fear;
Use me where I can help the most—
  Wherever the place—whatever the post;
Knowing—in Thee—I can never fail;
  Thy heart my "Home" at the end of the trail!"

(Important note: We wish to correct two printing errors which appeared in our latest issue of "Hope" (Oct.-Nov.): i.e., on page 12, line 7, "twelve centuries ago" should read "twelve thousand years ago": also, on page 17 line 3 the word "Rome" should have been "Athens". Thank you for your forgiving and understanding hearts!)